

REMARKS

Upon entry of this amendment, claims 4, 5, 7-10 and 13-16 are all the claims pending in the application. Claims 1-3, 6, 11 and 12 have been canceled by this amendment, and claims 13-16 have been added as new claims. No new matter has been added.

I. Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants thank the Examiner for indicating that claims 4 and 5 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. By this amendment, Applicants note that claims 4 and 5 have been rewritten in independent form, thereby placing these claims in condition for allowance.

II. Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claims 1-3 and 6 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ellis et al. (US 6,029,226) in view of Wallis (US 4,149,243); claims 7 and 8 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ellis et al. in view of Wallis, and further in view of Krantz (US 6,826,650); claim 9 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ellis et al. in view of Wallis, and further in view of Harari et al. (US 5,297,148); and claims 10-12 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ellis et al. in view of Wallis, and further in view of Carman et al. (US 6,272,632).

Regarding claims 1-3, 6, 11 and 12, as noted above, these claims have been canceled by this amendment.

Regarding claims 7-9, Applicants note that these claims have been amended so as to depend from allowable claim 5.

Regarding claim 10, which is drawn to a computer program stored on a computer-readable medium, Applicants note that this claim has been amended so as to correspond to rewritten claim 4. Accordingly, Applicants submit that claim 10 is in condition for allowance for at least similar reasons as claim 4, an indication of which is kindly requested.

III. New Claims

Regarding claims 13-15, Applicants note that these claims depend from allowable claim 4, and are therefore considered patentable at least by virtue of their dependency.

Regarding claim 16, which is drawn to a computer program stored on a computer-readable medium, Applicants note that this claim has been amended so as to correspond to rewritten claim 5. Accordingly, Applicants submit that claim 16 is in condition for allowance for at least similar reasons as claim 5, an indication of which is kindly requested.

IV. Conclusion

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited.

If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may best be resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The Commissioner is authorized to charge any deficiency or to credit any overpayment associated with this communication to Deposit Account No. 23-0975.

Respectfully submitted,

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